

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2016

Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Room 2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Kaptur:

As the Committee proceeds with the difficult task of determining how to allocate available funds within the accounts of the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2017, we write in full support of the \$42.7 million budget request by the President in the Fiscal Year 2017 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill to continue construction of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP).

Our nation's infrastructure and waterways are the lifeline of the export and import trade that is key to our international competitiveness and job growth, and which generates more than \$200 billion in annual federal, state and local tax revenue. We also note that the budget request for SHEP and for the overall Construction Account of the Civil Works programs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is well below the minimum required to facilitate the international trade and domestic job growth which is key to restoring fiscal and economic health to the nation.

It is important to recognize that SHEP is, quite literally, the most exhaustively studied and carefully validated project of its type in the nation. It has been authorized by Congress twice, and it has been funded for studies or construction for 17 consecutive years. Its early stages of construction are being financed primarily by the State of Georgia, providing their share, up front, of the project totaling more than \$200 million. Most important, the USACE analysis shows that SHEP will deliver at least \$174 million in net annual economic benefits to the nation upon its completion.

However, a partially completed channel deepening project provides zero value to the nation. If the rate of SHEP's construction were to continue at the rate reflected in the FY 2017 request, the completion of SHEP would be delayed by at least five years and USACE estimates that the delay would add well over \$100 million to the project construction cost. Combined with the multi-year loss of the \$174 million in annual economic benefits, the total cost of under-funding SHEP is a staggering and unrecoverable loss of nearly \$1 billion.

For that reason, we recommend that the Subcommittee include within those funds available under the Subcommittee's Additional Funding allocation no less than \$80 million for construction of deep-draft navigation projects.

We thank you and the Committee for your hard work now and in the weeks ahead, and we appreciate your consideration of our request.

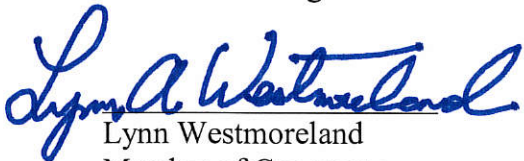
Sincerely,



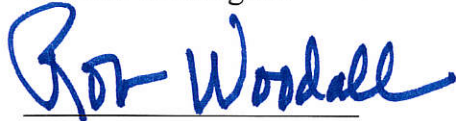
Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



Tom Graves
Member of Congress



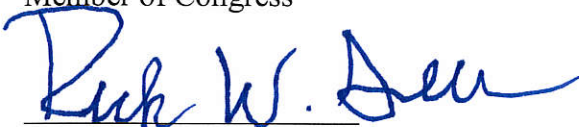
Lynn Westmoreland
Member of Congress



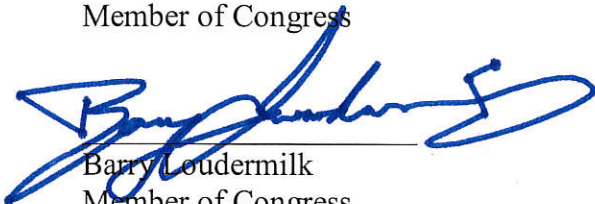
Rob Woodall
Member of Congress



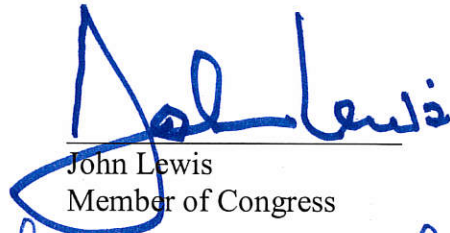
Austin Scott
Member of Congress



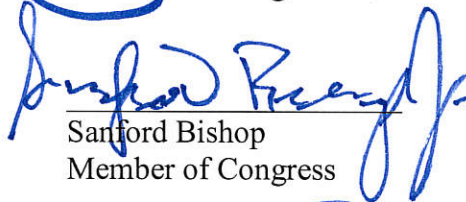
Rick Allen
Member of Congress



Barry Loudermilk
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



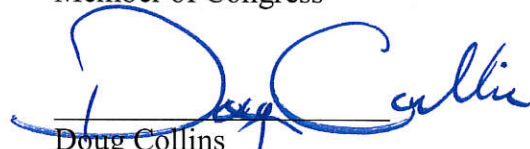
Sanford Bishop
Member of Congress




David Scott
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



Doug Collins
Member of Congress



Jody Hice
Member of Congress